

## Message Text

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11  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /077 W  
----- 099319

R 020827Z AUG 76  
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5886  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DOHA  
AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 3646

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDIP KN KS KU  
SUBJECT: REPUBLIC OF KOREA RELATIONS WITH KUWAIT

1. DURING JULY 31 CALL AT EMBASSY, ROK TRADE COMMISSIONER JAE-WON ROH TOLD ME THAT HE WAS GENERALLY CONTENT WITH THE STATE OF RELATIONS THAT EXISTED BETWEEN HIS GOVT AND GOK. WHILE IT WAS TRUE THAT ROK DID NOT HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH KUWAIT, NEITHER DID NORTH KOREA. IN FACT, IT WAS HIS RECOMMENDATION THAT HIS GOVT NOT PUSH AT THIS TIME FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH KUWAIT. WHILE THE PRESENT RELATIONSHIP PRESENTS SOME INCONVENIENCES FOR HIM AND HIS STAFF, ROH BELIEVED THAT IT SERVED ROK'S INTERESTS QUITE WELL, PARTICULARLY ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE.

2. THERE IS, OF COURSE, A NORTH KOREAN TRADE MISSION WHICH OPERATES ON THE SAME BASIS AS HIS OWN, BUT HE OBSERVED THAT THERE WERE SMALL WAYS IN WHICH TREATMENT OF HIS MISSION WAS MORE FAVORABLE. FOR EXAMPLE, HE NOTED THAT NORTH KOREANS MUST SEEK INITIAL APPROVAL OF MINISTRY OF COMMERCE OF EACH  
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REQUEST FOR RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR NEW STAFF MEMBER, WHEREAS HE

WAS PERMITTED TO APPLY DIRECTLY TO KUWAITI IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES AND RECEIVED RESIDENCE PERMITS WITHOUT ANY DIFFICULTY.

3. ROH ALSO ADMITTED THAT, ON A FEW OCCASIONS, HE HAD ISSUED VISAS TO HIGH KUWAITI PERSONALITIES WISHING TO TRAVEL TO KOREA ALTHOUGH TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR HIS MISSION HERE SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED PERFORMANCE OF VISA FUNCTION. HOWEVER, FIRST VISA ISSUED WAS TO SON OF CROWN PRINCE WHO MADE SECRET TRIP TO SOUTH KOREA DURING SPRING AND IT WAS ISSUED IN RESPONSE TO A NOTE FROM AMIRI DIWAN. WHILE THIS WAS CLEARLY NOT A REGULAR PRACTICE, IT WAS APPARENT THAT KUWAITIS WILL PERMIT THIS WHEN IT SUITED THEIR INTEREST. THEREFORE, ROH SAID HE WOULD EVEN BE OPPOSED TO ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSULATE IN KUWAIT ON THE GROUNDS THAT THIS WOULD NOT PROVIDE ANY ADVANTAGES OVER THOSE WHICH HIS MISSION ALREADY ENJOYS AND WOULD PROVIDE OPENING FOR NORTH KOREANS.

4. IT WAS ROH'S HOPE THAT, AS KOREAN BUSINESS AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY INCREASED IN KUWAIT IN FUTURE, KUWAITIS THEMSELVES MIGHT ASK FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH HIS COUNTRY. HOWEVER, IF THAT OCCURRED, HE WOULD WISH IT TO BE ON SAME BASIS ARRANGED IN BAHRAIN WHERE GOB HAD ASKED FOR AN EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS WITH ROK WITHOUT ACCORDING RECIPROCAL TREATMENT TO NORTH KOREANS. ACCORDING TO ROH, BAHRAINIS TOLD NORTH KOREANS THAT THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO RAISE THEIR RELATIONS TO DIPLOMATIC LEVEL WHEN NORTH KOREA'S BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES EQUALLED THOSE OF SOUTH KOREA.

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